

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DAMASC 03370 311112Z

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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O R 311019Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

USDEL ALEXANDRIA IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4435

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 3370

NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, SY

SUBJ: SHIHABI SEES DIM PROSPECTS FOR SYRO-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS.

REF: DAMASCUS 3289

1. IN COURSE OUR MEETING AUGUST 30, SHIHABI VOLUNTEERED THAT HE SHARED ASAD'S PESSIMISM ABOUT UTILITY OF ANY NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL FOR FURTHER INTERIM ACCORD ON GOLAN.

2. SAID I COULD NOT AT THIS STAGE INITIATE ANY DISCUSSION OF NEGOTIATION BUT URGED HIM TO KEEP IN MIND YOUR AUGUST 23 COMMENT THAT IT WOULD BE AGAINST SYRIA'S INTEREST TO APPEAR UNWILLING TO NEGOTIATE.

3. SHIHABI RESPONDED THAT FOR ISRAEL AND "OTHERS" (IN CONTEXT HE CLEARLY MEANT EGYPT), A SYRIAN DECISION TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS WAS FAR MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT SYRIA MIGHT ACHIEVE AT END OF PROCESS. LOOKING DOWN THE ROAD, DAMASCUS PRESENTLY COULD NOT SEE ITSELF ACHIEVING ANYTHING MEANINGFUL. HE THEN COMMENTED WE SHOULD REALIZE THAT SYRIA WOULD TAKE ITS DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO NEGOTIATE PURELY ON BASIS ITS PERCEPTION OF ITS NATIONAL INTEREST.

REFERRING BACK TO OUR DISCUSSION EARLIER IN MEETING ABOUT

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PAGE 02 DAMASC 03370 311112Z

CURRENT STATE OF SYRO-IRAQI AND SYRO-PALESTINIAN RELATIONS,

SHIHABI EMPHASIZED THAT NO OUTSIDER WAS IN POSITION  
INFLUENCE SYRIA'S DECISION ON NEGOTIATIONS.

4. COMMENT. DESPITE SHIHABI'S CONCLUDING ASSERTION, IT SEEMS  
CLEAR TO ME THAT ASAD WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT LIKELY  
REACTIONS OF PALESTINIANS, IRAQIS AND A NUMBER OF OTHER  
OUTSIDERS, INCLUDING SOVIETS, IN REACHING HIS DECISION.  
WOULD NOTE WE ARE PICKING UP INCREASING NUMBER OF MATTER-  
OF-FACT COMMENTS BY SYRIANS, INCLUDING DATT'S MILITARY  
CONTACTS, THAT SYRIA WILL SHORTLY BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS  
UNDER USG AUSPICES.  
MURPHY

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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